



Renfrew County and District Health Unit

"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

Received May 03 2019

MOH Office

April 29, 2019

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queens Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1
Sent via email: doug.ford@pc.ola.org

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Hepburn Block 10th Floor
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1E9
Sent via email: christine.elliott@pc.ola.org

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Elliott,

During a special board meeting on April 24, 2019, the Board of Health for the Renfrew County and District Health Unit reviewed the budget tabled by the government of Ontario on April 11, 2019, with regard to the proposed changes to local public health. We are writing to express the views of the board members regarding the implications to the public health system.

Transformation of the system is planned for the immediate future, including the consolidation of public health units from 35 down to 10. The board asks the province to stop the planned reduction from 35 Health Units to 10.

As well, the funding arrangement between the Province and the municipalities is under review. We ask that the Province maintain the current 75 percent provincial, 25 percent municipal funding for Renfrew County and District Health Unit. The recently announced provincial funding reduction will have a devastating effect on the health of the residents of Renfrew County and District.

The board understands these changes have been announced in response to achieving efficiencies while increasing responsiveness to local public health needs.

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The board asks the provincial government reconsider the funding reduction, as this will challenge our ability to continue to provide these essential services within our community.

The Province will soon begin consultations with individual boards of health and health units regarding the transition details from 35 health units to 10. The board, however, requests the Province of Ontario maintain the health protection and health promotion mandate of Renfrew County and District Health Unit.

The Board asks the Province of Ontario to recognize the vast distance and lack of homogeneity in Ontario. The Province must ensure that distances are manageable and that public health units are not overwhelmed because they are providing service to areas that are too large and vast.

The board in respect to public health restructuring affirms support of the Province of Ontario in implementing a common governance model for existing public health units. We request that consultations on this model begin immediately and do appreciate the opportunity to participate in this process.

Additionally, the board asks the Province to ensure this change in public health governance and organization is as effective and efficient as possible, while maintaining the strong public health presence and impact in our community.

The board considers these specific issues of significant importance during a potential restructuring process:

- Guarantee that service levels to our community will be maintained, with no service losses nor reduction to quality.
- Ensure meaningful involvement by the community throughout the change process.
- Improve the effectiveness of collaboration by grouping similar health unit populations together.
- Provide equitable access to lost administrative "back office" positions within the new Regional Public Health Entity for all current employees, through a fair competition process.
- Establish "back office" support services that are of equal quality or superior standards to those systems currently in place.

- Maintain appropriate municipal role in governance by obligated municipalities within the new structure.

The board commends the commitment by the Province to enhance the oral health efforts of public health with the \$90 million funding for low-income seniors.

As we continue to deliver essential front line health protection and promotion services, we look forward to working with the Ministry so we may, together, achieve the efficiency goals while meeting local public health needs.

Sincerely,



Janice Visneskie Moore
Chair, Board of Health

cc: Renfrew County and District Board of Health
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health
The Honourable John Yakabuski, MPP—Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke
Loretta Ryan, Association of Local Public Health Agencies—ALPHA
Ontario Medical Association—OMA
Northern Ontario Municipal Association—NOMA
Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities—FONOM
Monica Turner, Association of Municipalities—AMO
Rural Ontario Municipal Association—ROMA
Ontario Boards of Health
Renfrew County and District Municipalities and Townships